

PORTLAND ATARI CLUB

\$1.50

SEPTEMBER, 1987

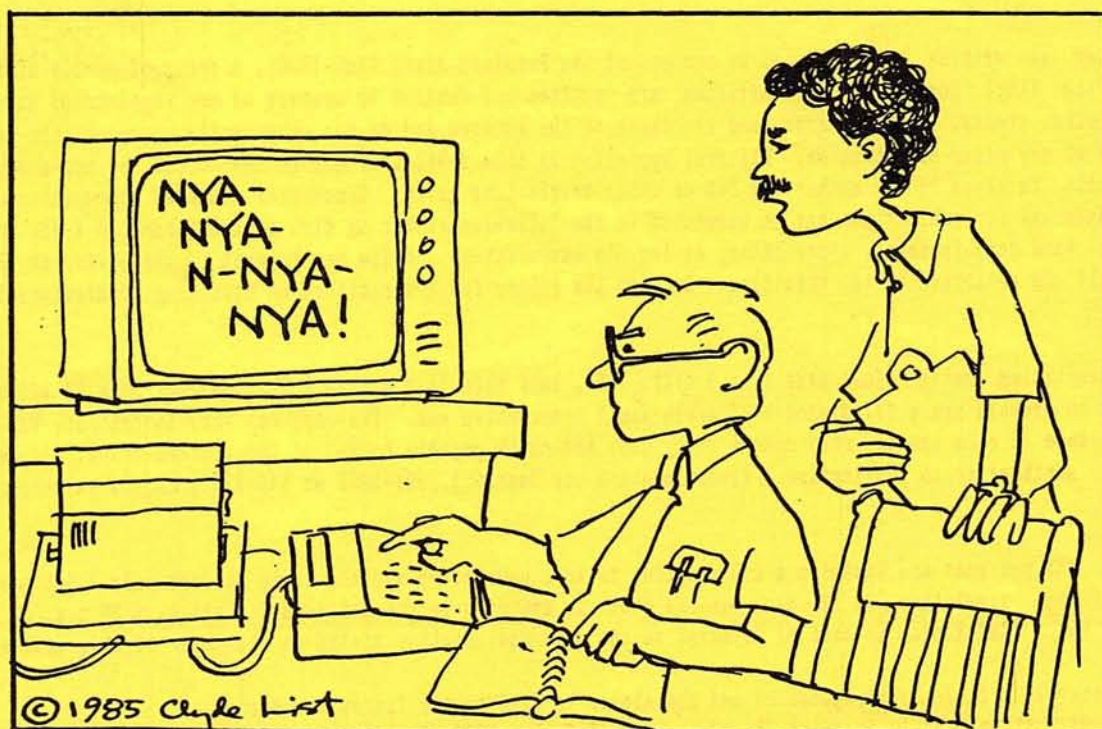
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Next General Meeting
Monday, September 14, 1987 at 6:30 p.m.
Northwest Service Center
1819 N.W. Everett St.

PAC BBS's 24 Hours - 7 Days a Week

Steve Billings
#1 - (503) 245-9405 - 300/1200 BPS
Melvin Waller
#2 - (503) 238-7130 - 300/1200 BPS

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"HMMM - THAT IS A NASTY BUG
YOU HAVE THERE!"

PORTLAND ATARI CLUB
(Not affiliated with ATARI, Inc.)

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Lee Bole	-Assistant, Typist
Lee Gassaway	-Ad Coordinator

Tim Rader	-ST Associate Editor
Melvin Waller	-Assistant, Typist
Clyde List	-Cartoons

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Commercial Advertising Rates: full page (7 x 9 1/2) - \$50, half page (7 x 4 1/2) - \$25, quarter page (3 1/4 x 4 1/2) - \$15. Ads must be prepaid and a 1/3 discount if given for 3 consecutive ads. The copy may vary in content, but the space must be the same in each issue. Send camera ready copy and check payable to PAC at the address below. Ad deadline is the 5th of the month prior to publication. Please contact Lee Gassaway (591-5252 or 642-2455) on all matters pertaining to advertizing.

Membership is \$25 per year and includes a subscription to this newsletter and access to members-only functions. Single copy price of the newsletter is \$1.50. General meetings are open to the public and start at 6:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month (2nd Monday in case of Holiday) on the date and location listed on the cover of this newsletter.

Exchange newsletters, article, correspondence and ads should be sent to the following address:
Portland Atari Club Attention: (appropriate board member), P.O. Box 1692, Beaverton, OR 97005

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PRESIDENTS COLUMN

By Dave Holliday

I hope you all have enjoyed your summer. The weather has been less than perfect but you can't have everything I guess. There have been a lot of things going on with the club and I want to mention a few of them here, although I'm sure some of them will be in the Board Meeting minutes section from Dan Gibson.

First effective September 1st the cost of membership will increase from \$20 to \$25. This is not a large increase and it is something that has been postponed for a long time. This is not an arbitrary decision, but one that has been discussed many times by the board. The club dues have been \$20 for a number of years even though the amenities of the club have greatly increased. We now have two bulletin boards with improved equipment and reliability over the single board of prior years. The newsletter printing costs have greatly increased over the years as well as postage. Also, we have been forced to pay for our meeting facilities that, in the past had been available to us at no charge. The other thing was a constantly expanding membership that distributed these costs over a large base. As you know from some of my previous articles, club membership is down over what it was, but we seem to have stabilized. I feel the board has done everything within its power to keep costs down and stay within the funds available. We are reducing the cost of our meeting area by combining and moving to a room within the Northwest Service Center that is smaller but closer to our needs. We are working at reducing the newsletter costs. As an example, the last newsletter costs were 40 % less than the prior issue. We have not bought any software this year to give away but have instead given away only software donated to the club. Unfortunately, this is not enough. I know some people will feel \$25 is too much. I would like to point out that this is equal to the membership dues charged by the other Atari club in this area and par with most other Atari clubs nationwide. It should be known that even with the increase in dues this barely covers the cost of producing the newsletter each month. The club relies heavily on sales of club disks. Because this is the case, we have added several new disks to our libraries over the past few months. If you have not looked at what is available lately, in both our 8 bit and ST libraries you are missing out on some great software at a cheap price but also a painless way to help support your club.

I hope this has given you a good understanding of why the dues were increased and what the board is doing to keep costs contained. I think the worst thing we, as the

board of directors, can do is make changes and decisions without your knowledge and whenever possible we try to tell you of upcoming decisions of importance before acting on them. This was the case at the last meeting about a dues increase. I would like to take a minute to encourage anyone who wishes to attend a board meeting to feel free to do so, whether to bring an issue up or just to see what goes on. All I ask is that you contact me before the meeting so that we know how many will be there and to tell you where the board will meet. Usually, we meet the third Wednesday of each month, but this has been changed on occasion so please call first.

The next change is the board has approved Lee Bole to take over the position of SIG coordinator. Richard Cowger, our previous SIG coordinator, had several changes in his personal life that needed his attention and felt he could not supply the amount of time needed to serve on the board. I would like to thank Richard for his time on the board and wish him good luck.

A change I mentioned earlier in this column was concerning the costs of producing our newsletter. One way to contain printing costs is to reduce the size. Our newsletter has been up to twenty four pages in the past, but much of this was from reprinting articles from other sources. Although many good articles come from other clubs, to reprint articles just to fill up the newsletter is not a cost effective practice. To correct this, we have decided to print only club member produced articles. We may, from time to time reprint an article that seems to have a broad reader base within our membership but not simply to fill space. I wish to stress this doesn't mean you shouldn't write an article because you feel it is not good enough, or too long. If we get ten articles in one month, and the newsletter would be too large, we may print one or two in the following club newsletter, but any article (of good taste) written by a member will be published. So this is not the time to stop writing those articles; to the contrary, if we are to justify a newsletter then it should reflect the views of its membership, not a club in Slabovia. I hope to see a much more active participation in the newsletter by you. It would please me no end to continue to publish a large newsletter filled solely with articles from our membership.

I hope this column does not sound doom and gloom because that is not the case. In the last few months I have been encouraged to see more [next page]

SIG COORDINATOR
By Lee Bole, P.A.C.

For the remaining months of 1987 I shall serve as Special Interest Groups Coordinator for the Portland Atari Club.

As Coordinator, I hope to serve as the central point for any members to reach in order to develop a meeting of members sharing mutual interests. I'll be the one who receives news of potential areas of interests among the membership and then I'll gather persons into SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS with a meeting place and time, and hopefully, a leader for each SIG will arise from among the interested members.

As you know, a user group's best function is to provide a place where computer users meet with one another and share common interests. Beginners often like to get together and explore their mutual problems, and share their solutions and innovations. As experience develops, members take directions that focus into more specific areas, such as word processing, or databases, or games, or programming, or other areas. A Special Interest Group is a fine place to investigate a program you might be interested in buying, but would like a little experience with it before putting out the money. You may learn aspects of the program which may affect your decision whether or not to buy.

A Special Interest Group is also a good place to learn more about particular programs you are presently using, but maybe not as fully as you would like.

I am extending an invitation to all members who wish to pursue any special interest to contact me. I shall get

you together and make arrangements for place and time of meeting. This is where I shall serve as a center point.

It is up to you, the interested membership, to let me know in what areas your interests lie.

We currently have some very successful ongoing SIGs: 8-BIT Explorers, Communications, Newsletter, ST Bastside, and ST Explorers. These SIGs cover some broad areas of interests. I sense a need for more specific SIGs, probably of limited duration, dealing in depth with some PARTICULAR program. For example, some word processor, or some particular database.

We know that in some other user groups, the IBM club, for example, there are many well-attended SIGs that study particular programs. For example, WORD PERFECT or LOTUS are programs that draw many IBM users into a very well-attended Special Interest Group.

If you have been using some program that you're having some questions about, or feel you would like to know what others are doing with the same program, or want to gather with other members for the purpose of covering some specific area, please give me a call at 284-2945.

A MIDI group is presently in formation, so is an ST NEW OWNERS SIG, so if you are interested in either of these, please give me a call. Remember, you paid dues to belong to this fine club, so get all you can for your money! JOIN A SIG.

%%
%%

President Column [Continue]

EDITORS NOTES
Teri Williams

participation from members who have not been involved in the past. It is the involvement of more people that is going to keep the club going and not just the number of memberships. The club still has a lot to offer an Atari computer owner, either the new, or long time one. If you haven't been to a meeting in a while, come to the next one. I think you will find a lot of good information available. I hope to see a whole bunch of new faces at the next meeting. Till next time, Dave.

Boy! Is my face red. My apologies to Milt Ingram for leaving out part of his article on AtariWriter with SpartaDos. I am reprinting it in it's entirety.

A cheery hello to Marshall in Canada, who visit us at the Last General Meeting. /tw

BOARD NOTES

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING ST PORTION

By David Roberts

At this month's meeting we will be taking a look at a wide range of products. The most promising thing that we hope to show is the "Mega ST". You can take this announcement for what it's worth (not much, but hopeful), since I have no confirmations at this time. If the Mega is a no-show then I will surely have something else to amaze you people with. Along with that, I will be demonstrating a new game called Barbarian. It's a good arcade game and deserves a look at. We will also demo Degas Elite and, as always, we will see if there is a new club disk to look at also.

I have looked at the surveys I collected in July (Yes, I know, you probably didn't know there was one, but that's okay because I intend to make a point of it at the next meeting).. anyway, they gave me a look at what some of you people were interested in, so I intend to use as many of the suggestions as possible.

Finally, I would like to hear from some of you, either by telephone or by mail, on the PAC BBS's. I need volunteers to give demo's and I need suggestions on what you would like to see. Also, I'd like to hear any complaints (or compliments) you have about what has gone on since we have begun this new format. Please, make your feelings known, good or bad; we need to have some direction. Thanks and see you at the next meeting.

BOARD MEETING NOTES

Dan Gibson

The July Board Meeting was held at 7 p.m. on July 16, 1987 at Lee Bole's Home. Attending were Dan Gibson, Dave Holliday, Randall Leong, Michael Whiteley, Glen Plam, Jim Miller, Lee Bole, Teri Williams, and Mel Waller.

BUSINESS

The board spent a good deal of time discussing the loss of members and club expenses. It was decided to skip one newsletter this summer to regroup and save money. We will need to promote the PAC Club more. Jim Miller and Michael Whiteley will head up this effort. Lee Bole was appointed to replace Richard Cowger as Special Interest Group Coordinator.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Bank Balance	\$679.90
Revenues:	
Memberships	\$320.00
Software Sales	77.00
Ads	30.00
Expenses:	
Newsletter	(327.60)
Phone Bill	(80.34)
Software	(40.00)
Newsletter Supplies	(14.70)
Ending Bank Balance	\$644.26

HOTLINE

The following people have generously offered to take telephone queries in the areas indicated.

Adventure Games	Zant Burdine	206-695-5604
BASIC Programming	Nick Yost	981-0838
	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
BBS Usage	Steve Billings	246-1751
	Melvin Waller	230 0248
C	Randal Schwartz	626-6907
Cassette Operation	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
DOS Operation	Wayne Winterbottom	255-8219
	Gary Lippert	237-7069
dBMAN	Richard Barhitte	206-573-0292
FORTH Programming	Ron Chaffer	283-5691
	Ricky Wooldridge	224-7163
Hardware	Gary Lippert	237-7069
Modem	Gary Lippert	237-7069
Operatin System	Nick Yost	981-0838
Pascal	B. Deloy Graham	649-6993
ST Adventure Games	Jim Miller	641-6356
ST General	Chuck Hall	626-3717
ST Fundamentals	Richard Barhitte	206-573-0292
ST Logo	Randal Schwartz	626-6907

221B BAKER STREET

By The Mad Reviewer

(With grateful acknowledgements to I.B. Computers who provided the program.)

(221B BAKER STREET is an 8-bit Atari game.)

The fog has engulfed the street and the bridge is ahead of you. The street lights form pools of illumination in the fog. There is the distant sound of a horse and carriage on an adjacent street. You also hear the scurrying of a rat and its squeal of pain as a cat pounces on it. There are footsteps behind you and a mysterious splash in the river. In the distance Big Ben strikes 11:45pm.

By now you should know this is my kind of town. Have you ever wanted to try to out-Holmes Mr. Sherlock Holmes? Or maybe Inspector Lestrade is your version of the ultimate detective. But what about the others -- Dr. Watson and Ms. Irene Adler? Maybe they were the REAL power behind the Holmes.

Here is one of the NEW RELEASES, one by DATASOFT, "221b BAKER ST." For the \$35-40 price, you are getting a VERY good program. There is an instruction manual, a Case Book 1, a pad to keep track of clues on, and an order form for expansion Case Disk #1 (\$14.95). This is for use when you have solved all the mysteries on the original disk. What fun! You really must have the Case Book and the instruction manual to play this game, as you will be consulting them frequently during the game.

Let me say again that this is not just another game ported over to the Atari after it was designed on a Commodore or Apple. HERE IS A GAME THAT WAS ACTUALLY UPGRADED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SUPERIOR GRAPHICS AND SOUND OF THE ATARI. The game is for from 1-4 players. When you play with one player you play for score. If there are more players, you play against each other. When you play with others you will be using coded clues to try to keep your opponents from knowing what your clues are while you try to break their codes to obtain their clues allowing you to solve the mystery first with the least clues. WHEW! I'm not going to try that one again.

The program features excellent graphics including a 3D type gameboard and VOICE. YES, THERE IS SPEECH SYNTHESIS. You may use joystick or keyboard, I would recommend keyboard, as it is easier to control your character. As you enter each building, there may or may not be a clue. If there is a person in the room they might talk to you and you might get a clue or maybe not, Hmmm. You are rated by how many clues you have used to

solve the case. Then on to the next case.

All in all, this is one of the better programs to come out for the ATARI for a long time. This is NOT a cheaply done port-over, but as I said before, it has been upgraded to ATARI. Again thanks to I.B. Computers for the program to review.

AUTODUEL WARNING!

(reprinted from MILB HIGH May87)

If you've got an ICD doubler installed in your 1050, or are using an INDUS drive, you'll want to be very cautious before purchasing ORIGIN SYSTEMS new AUTODUEL game. Basically all you get is an endless repeat of the title screen! Previous ORIGIN Systems products ran fine on these drives. They have apparently switched to a new copy-protection scheme. Unfortunately, the scheme has the effect of zapping a lot of honest users of the software. If you use an ICD Doubler or an INDUS, keep your \$\$\$ in your pocket!

[illegible]

PRINTSHOP UPDATE

(Reprinted from SLCC JOURNAL April '87)

Early copies of this program do not completely support the 850 interface. By booting the printshop Graphics disk number three and pressing the letter "U" you will be able to update your Printshop Master disk with a program contained on the graphics disk.

[illegible]

CYCLE KNIGHT and 50 GAMES
by THE MAD REVIEWER
[Review copies supplied by I B COMPUTERS]

(These are 8-Bit Programs)

CYCLE KNIGHT

What do you get when you cross [THE REALM OF IMPOSSIBILITY] with [ACTION BIKER] and the result marries [A DRAGONS TALE]??? Well, I'll tell you; "IT'S A WILD AND CRAZY" game called CYCLE KNIGHT. "THIS IS MY KIND OF GAME". Here is something new from ARTWORKS, the people who brought you STRIP POKER have done it again.

Here is a game with something for everyone. You ride a motorcycle thru a series of rooms, blowing up the nastys and collecting the souls of the serfs in the room to give to the lord of the room, or he won't let you go on to the next room. By the way, you need to complete all the rooms to "WHAT"? You guessed it - you get to rescue the Knight or Princess as the case may be.

You get to throw bombs, run over serfs, blow up fuel tanks, ride over narrow bridges, and in general make a mess of the LORDS area. But is he MAD??? NOOOoooo, he isn't; just give him all the souls you collected and he will let you pass to the next room.

The graphics are good, the play is fast. OK, so the plot line isn't the greatest and the action consists of; if it moves run-over it or shoot it, if it doesn't move, blow it up.

Here is a game in the good old tradition. There are no tricks or traps. There is just good old fun and at the price you can't beat it with a stick or anything else. This is the reason it is called a joystick.

50 GAMES

OK, I could see it coming. You should have seen it coming to. Maybe if we bury our heads in the sand it will go away. This turkey is (3), count them, THREE disk sides of OLD, NO ANCIENT, video games. Shades of ANTIC and COMPUTE and ANALOG. I knew those old issues must have gone somewhere. Well, mama said if you can't say something nice....

Yes, Virginia, there are 50 games. No, Virginia, they are not on one disk. Ok, maybe you could look at the listing of each game to see how the programmer did what

he/she did. Nope, you can't do that either; the disk is COPY PROTECTED and you can't read the files.

By the way most of the files are written in BASIC language. Anyhow if you would like to see what some of the early, real early, Apple games were like, Go for it. Or maybe you could spend the 15 bucks on a 10 pack of floppy disks, or a Joy-Stick. Bye for Now.

IMPORTANT DATES

BOARD MEETING	SEPTEMBER 12
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	OCTOBER 4

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RUN ATARIWRITER PLUS WITH SPARTADOS

By Milt Ingram, PAC

Atariwriter Plus is great, BUT.....

Every time I use it I have unkind thoughts about the people at Atari who seem to be determined to prevent me from using some of the features I like best about my 800XL. These include a 256K expanded memory and U.S. Doubler equipped 1050 drives used with the SpartaDos operating system. I could have a 128K randisk to allow rapid switching between several files. I could use double density for added file capacity and time/date stamping of files, using the R-TIME 8 cartridge or the SpartaDos Clock.

Unfortunately, none of this seemed possible because of the way Atariwriter Plus was supplied on a copy protected "boot" disk. Then, along came the article by Carolyn Hoglin in the July Antic magazine, explaining how she adapted the program to run with TOPDOS. I determined that I would do the same for SpartaDos and include the randisk and time and date stamped files. I chose not to alter the original Atariwriter Plus disk, but came up with a method which uses a batch file to perform the entire boot operation. A disk swap is necessary, but everything else is automatic.

Here's how it can be done. First, initialize a SpartaDos disk using X32D.DOS (SpartaDos version 3.2), and copy the SpartaDos files RD.COM and TDLINB.COM to it. Then, onto this same disk copy the AUTORUN.SYS file from the Atariwriter Plus disk and rename it WRITE.COM. Finally, create the following STARTUP.BAT (batch) file:

```
TDLINB
RD D3: /E
COPY WRITE.COM D3:
;
;REMOVE BOOT DISK AND INSERT
;ATARIWRITER + DISK IN DRIVE 1
;
PAUSE
TD OFF
BASIC OFF
```

D3:WRITE

When this disk is booted it performs the following operations:

TDLINB - sets a time and date clock from the R-TIME 8 cartridge. If you don't have the R-TIME 8 cartridge, use the TIME and DATE commands to initialize the clock and calender.

RD D3: /E - sets up and formats a ram disk in the top 128K of memory. Note that this leaves 128K available to run the 130XE version of Atariwriter Plus.

COPY WRITE.COM D3: - copies the program WRITE.COM (the autorun.sys loader program from the Atariwriter Plus disk) to the randisk (D3:).

The next two lines are a prompt to replace the boot disk with the Atariwriter Plus disk. PAUSE - prints a prompt to "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE" after swapping disks.

TD OFF - turns off the screen display of time and date, but leaves the internal clock active to time/date stamp disk files.

BASIC OFF - turns off BASIC. Don't have to hold down OPTION key during boot.

D3:WRITE - loads and runs the loader program from randisk. It then loads Atariwriter Plus from Drive 1.

LOAD and SAVE will now work with either single density or double density disks. Double density disks will need to be formatted ahead of time. The built-in FORMAT command works from the DUP.SYS file on the disk and produces only DOS 2 format. (This will still work, as SpartaDos can read most Atari formats. You just lose the extra capacity.) Also, the INDEX command will show the disk directory in DOS 2 format, without the time and date. However, the information is there and can be read with the normal SpartaDos DIR command.

TIME - SOURCE from GIODATA COMPUTER SYSTEMS
Reviewed by Richard Barhitte, PAC (206) 573-0292

(TIME - SOURCE is a ST program)

I have read in the P.A.C. newsletter reviews of two internal clocks. However, the TIME - SOURCE is better.

Why is it better? The TIME - SOURCE not only provides a battery backup to the keyboard clock as MICRO-TIME and TIME - SAVER do, but it also provides an LED which indicates the state of the caps lock key. That means the LED is on when the caps lock is on, and off when the caps lock is off. The price is about the same as MICRO-TIME.

The installation procedure is about the same as the other two products. First, unscrew the case and remove the top. Second, turn the keyboard over. Note: you do not have to unplug the keyboard unless you are short of work space. Third, unplug the IC chip. Fourth, plug the IC chip into the TIME - SOURCE board as the instructions show. Fifth, plug the TIME - SOURCE board into the keyboard where the IC chip came from. Sixth, using the supplied double sided tape, place the batteries where they do not block the air vents. Seventh, tape the LED in place and replace the cover.

The LED can go in three places. It can go in the caps lock key which requires you to pry off the caps lock key, drill a hole in it, and then glue the LED in the hole.

Second, it can go in the crack between the keys and the computer top. This simply requires that you tape the LED in place. The third option is to drill a hole in the

computer top and tape the LED to the keyboard directly below the hole. I chose the last method.

Once I had my computer back together, I was shocked to find the time was always set to the default time when I booted the computer. At first I thought that the TIME - SOURCE was defective. The problem is that the November 15, 1986 control panel only checks the GEMDOS clock and if it is not set, the control panel will set both the GEMDOS clock and the keyboard clock to the default time. Note that there are two clocks in the ST, one maintained by GEMDOS and one in the keyboard IC. Therefore, it is necessary to have a program in your auto folder which will set the GEMDOS time before the control panel is loaded. There are several public domain programs which will do this.

After this problem was solved, I discovered that the LED did not always indicate the correct state of the caps lock key. When I called Giodata, I was informed that there were 30 units which had this problem and that I was to send him the board and he would fix the problem free of charge. About one week after I sent him the TIME - SOURCE, I received the modified board back and it has worked correctly ever since. It is very pleasant to work with a responsive company. If it happens to be a Washington company so much the better. Why shop out of state unless you have to?

%%%%%%%%%%%
 %%%%%%%%%%

General Meeting

The first Monday in September is a holiday so we will meet on September the 14th.

~~% %~~

BBS UPDATE

By Steve Billings, PAC Board member and SYSOP of BBS #1

Both the club boards are now back in full operation. Board #2 which runs on the club 130 XE is now being run by Melvin Waller. It has a new phone number, so change your auto dialer to call 238-7130. Board #2 is for PAC club members only, so there is less competition and less discussion of other less powerful 8 bit and 16 bit machines.

Keep up the calls and the uploads to the bulletin boards. It is your contributions that make the boards an interesting place to visit. Find the latest gossip and hottest public domain software on the club BBS.

It is often difficult to convey your message on the BBS just using the keyboard. We are not all great writers who are able to convey our subtle opinions with the written word. If you are like me, you have probably wished that there were punctuations you could use to get across feelings not covered by the period, question mark or exclamation point. Well, here is some help for you. The following are some punctuation you can use to get across the finer points of your discussion. Turn the page 90 degrees clockwise to see the cartoon faces that describe the intent of the expression.

```
: -O Wow!
: -, Smirk
: -/ Grim
: -* Oops
: -) Wink
: -) Sardonic incredulity
: -" Pursing lips
% Doubled up with laughter
: -w Speaking with forked tongue
: -) Smiling
: -( Frowning
: -v Speaking
: -V Shouting
: -c Unhappy
: -C Unbelievable
: -// Angry
```

There you are. That should help you get your point across if you are just joking or being sarcastic. These symbols came out of the Old Oregon alumni newsletter and should cover every single nuance of communication that you could possibly need to use.

What's that? You still think something is lacking, modem breath? OK, just for you I have pulled the starter

cord on my brain and tried to think up a few that were not in the list.

```
: -x Censored
: -X Very censored
: -S Been on the computer
      too late at night
: -P Drool
: -Q Cool
: -! No comment
```

Ok, I don't want to use up all the possibilities. Maybe you can come up with some too. Try using them out on the board. If you come up with a new one try it out. I am going to keep a list by my desk and if I see some good ones I will pass them along. (If they are too weird I will need an explanation of what they mean.)

There is a cloud on the horizon for people who use the commercial bulletin boards which include services such as Compuserve, Genie, Dow Jones News/Retrieval. Up to now these information services have received preferred status with the phone service so that you were not charged for a long distance call even though the call may be going to another state.

This may change by the end of the year. The FCC is considering making users pay interstate fees for using the trunk lines that transfer the calls to the main computer. These fees include 3 cents per minute traffic sensitive access charge, a 4.3 cents per minute terminating access charge, and a 2 cents per minute originating charge. This adds up to 9.3 cents a minute or over \$5.50 an hour. This would essentially double the cost of using GENIE which is the best bargain in online services right now. The FCC says these cost changes are still in the consideration stage, but that they will probably implement the charges beginning January 1, 1988.

Well, that's the bad news. I don't know if there is anything we users can do to change their minds. I suggest writing your Congressman and expressing your opinion. Let your opinion also be known by leaving messages on the online services. I think the best bet is a strong lobby sponsored by the online services themselves. They surely have an interest in keeping the costs down. Many will fail to stay in business without the continuing interest and support of the (next page)

DISK DRIVE MODIFICATION

By Bruce Allen, ST user in England

I have both 1-Meg and 1/2-Meg Atari drives, and I have a mod on my 1-Meg drive which allows me to write to side A or B of the disk at the flick of a switch. This allows me to put a backup Boot disk on either side of the disk, and can boot whichever one I like. I received the info from a chap in Australia, and several of us now have done the mod. I don't know if there are any long-term problems, but..... here goes:

The object of the modification is to locate the wire running from disk drive connector pin 2 (labeled in the ST Manual as SIDE 0 SELECT) to the disk drive unit, usually one of the wires in the large grey ribbon cable. Cut this wire, and install a changeover switch so that the side of the cut nearest the drive unit is connected to the common pole of the switch. Connect the other end of the cut wire to one of the other terminals on the switch. The remaining terminal of the switch should be connected to LOGIC GROUND, as connected to pins 3 and 7 on the disk drive connectors. That's it.

With the switch in one position, the wire is connected as per original state, and the drive will function as normal. With the switch in the other position, the wire from the drive unit end is grounded, and selects the back side of the disk as a single-sided disk. The only thing the mod doesn't cope with as it stands is that it doesn't work with programs that ask you to insert disk B and look to see if you remove the disk. Flicking the switch doesn't actuate the optical disk change sensor. For example, DBEP SPACE is on two disks. If you boot disk A and when it asks for disk B to be inserted, flick the switch, (disk B being on the back side), unless you retract and re-insert the disk, it won't work. Apart from

that, it works great, and saves a lot of disk space. Of course it isn't of any use for files, as one might just as well use the 1-Meg disk fully formatted as a double-sided disk.

I can't really send you a diagram, as there appears to be several versions of drives. My Australian friend sent me a sketch, with various things drawn in it, and I followed the sketch, cut the third wire from the left, on the large internal ribbon cable (grey with about 30 wires connecting between circuit board with all the external sockets and the drive mechanism), as per his drawing fitted the switch, but when I tried it, it worked the same as before, no matter what position I put the switch in. So after a little bit of trial and error, I reversed two connections he had shown on the diagram and it worked, then I worked out why it was working. I gave the info to a friend who had a fairly new SF314 drive. He opened his drive up and the circuit board which has all the connector sockets on was totally different. Anyway, he cut the third wire from the left as for mine, and it didn't work correctly. After a bit of fiddling he got his going. He came round to my place and we examined the drives. Using a meter, we traced the wire from drive connector socket PIN 2 to be the third from the right on his drive. The third from the left in that ribbon cable in his drive turned out to be LOGIC GROUND, so as I have said, the best thing to do is to trace out with a meter the connection from PIN 2 on drive connectors, and the large ribbon cable.

Hope that isn't too confusing.

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BBS update (continue)

home computer user. Raising costs will decrease this support.

The ones with the most to lose are the users like us. Computer communication is a major advancement in the sharing of information and ideas. It is the most significant development in communication since the introduction of television and in many respects is more healthy, because it is interactive and creative for the participant.

OK, enough hand wringing. Get out there and communicate!

{ Editor's Note: Besides writing to your Congress - person, Representatives and Senators, you can also complain to the FCC:}

Chairman Dennis R. Patrick
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20510

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